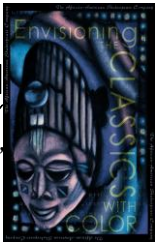


AFRICAN-AMERICAN
SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
"Envisioning the Classics With Color"



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**AFRICAN-AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
ANNOUNCES 2011-12 SEASON**

December 2011-April 2012

SAN FRANCISCO (June xx, 2011) - San Francisco's **African-American Shakespeare Company** proudly announces the lineup for its **17th** season. The season marks African-American Shakespeare Company's second season under the artistic leadership of acclaimed actor and director **L. Peter Callender**. The season opens in December with an enchanting holiday production of **CINDERELLA** directed by Executive Director Sherri Young; this new take on the timeless fairytale has become a seasonal favorite for families and children of all ages. The season continues in March with Shakespeare's political potboiler **JULIUS CAESAR**, directed by **Michael Gene Sullivan**. Closing the season in April is the company's first World Premiere production, playwright and actress Nambi E. Kelley's **XTIGONE**, directed by Darryl Jones. Productions will be staged at the Buriel Clay Theater at the African American Art & Culture Complex in San Francisco. Tickets for the 2011-12 season on sale August 1. For tickets and information, the public may visit **African-AmericanShakes.org** or call **1-800-838-3006**.

"I am ecstatic about our 2011-2012 season," said African-American Shakespeare Company Artistic Director L. Peter Callender. "At African-American Shakespeare Company, we are dedicated to envisioning the classics with color. Just as we celebrate the many facets of diversity in the Bay Area, we are also actively trying to expand the definition of 'classic,' including American classics and classically-inspired new works in our repertoire as we continue to build upon our history of vibrant, creatively staged works. While looking forward, we also maintain our commitment to entertaining, engaging, and enriching our community."

Continues Callender, "I hope that this season continues to engage our audiences and the wider artistic community. We are in an exciting period of artistic growth at African-American Shakespeare Company and I would love for everyone to be a part of this new chapter in our history."

In chronological order, African-American Shakespeare Company's 2011-12 season is as follows:

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2011-12 SEASON

2-2-2-2-2-2

CINDERELLA

Directed by Sherri Young

December 2-18, 2011

Press Opening: December 2

San Francisco's African-American Shakespeare Company opens the 2011-12 season with an enchanting new production of **CINDERELLA**. This timeless tale, brought to whimsical, magical life just in time for the holidays, is an uplifting re-telling of the classic fairytale, featuring all of the pageantry, hilarity, and charm of the original, but with a soulful twist. This heartwarming story finds Cinderella, a young, beautiful dreamer, toiling away as a lowly scullery maid for her evil stepmother and stepsisters. With the help of a fabulous Fairy Godmother who makes the magic happen, Cinderella finds her Prince Charming and learns that anything is possible, even miracles. African-American Shakespeare Company Executive Director Sherri Young directs.

JULIUS CAESAR

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Michael Gene Sullivan

March 10-April 1, 2012

Press Opening: March 10

JULIUS CAESAR is not a history play. At a time in our country when partisanship has gone from bombast to blood sport, when patriotism and violence have become commingled, and when the people are so desperate for a leader they will follow anyone who promises them security while playing on their fears, the violent political struggles of Caesar are not history, they are nightly news. Full of passion and intensity, this political thriller about life and death political struggles tells us not only about the dead leaders we see etched in stone or live on TV each night, but also about the people who put them in power in the first place.

Directed by renowned actor and playwright Michael Gene Sullivan (San Francisco Mime Troupe) and featuring a small ensemble cast, African-American Shakespeare Company's version of **JULIUS CAESAR** highlights the similarities of the politicians who will say anything, and do anything, to win.

XTIGONE

World Premiere

By Nambi E. Kelley

Directed by Darryl Jones

April 20-May 13, 2012

Press Opening: April 20

Closing African-American Shakespeare Company's 17th season is the World Premiere of **XTIGONE**, acclaimed Chicago-based actress and emerging playwright Nambi E. Kelley's urban adaptation of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*. **XTIGONE** is Kelley's impassioned response to the untimely deaths of youths in her native Chicago as a result of gang violence, which has risen sharply in the past several years. Distressed by similar recent events in San Francisco, Oakland, and other Bay Area communities, African-American Shakespeare Company, in partnership with California State University-East Bay, brings to the stage this profoundly moving and resonant reflection of our troubled times. Directed by CSU-East Bay professor Darryl Jones, this ancient drama for our contemporary moment is a stirring depiction of the immense human cost of violence in our cities.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2011-12 SEASON

3-3-3-3-3-3

African-American Shakespeare Company was introduced in 1994 to create an opportunity and a venue for actors of color to hone their skills and talent in mastering some of the world's greatest classical roles. The company is dedicated to producing classic stage works from an African-American cultural perspective, providing opportunities and accessibility for minority artists and their communities to view these works in a manner that is inclusive of their cultural heritage. African-American Shakespeare Company has produced over 30 productions, toured to over 97 schools, and reached over 105,000 patrons through its main stage productions and arts education program.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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CINDERELLA

Directed by Sherri Young

December 2-18, 2011

Press Opening: December 2

JULIUS CAESAR

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Michael Gene Sullivan

March 10-April 1, 2012

Press Opening: March 10

XTIGONE

World Premiere

By Nambi E. Kelley

Directed by Darryl Jones

April 20-May 13, 2012

Press Opening: April 20

WHERE: Buriel Clay Theater at the African American Art & Culture Complex
762 Fulton Street (at Webster), San Francisco, CA

TICKETS: For tickets (\$20 student/seniors; \$30 general) and information, the public can call **1-800-838-3006** or visit **www.African-AmericanShakes.org**

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2011-12 SEASON

4-4-4-4-4-4

African-American Shakespeare Company is funded in part by the Zellerbach Family Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Grants for the Arts/SF Hotel Tax Fund, San Francisco Foundation, the California Arts Council, a state agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, Shakespeare in American Communities, Fleishhacker Foundation, and the James Irvine Foundation.